

## THE ROCHESTER BRIDGE LANDS IN GRAIN

By JOHN H. EVANS, F.S.A., F.R.G.S.

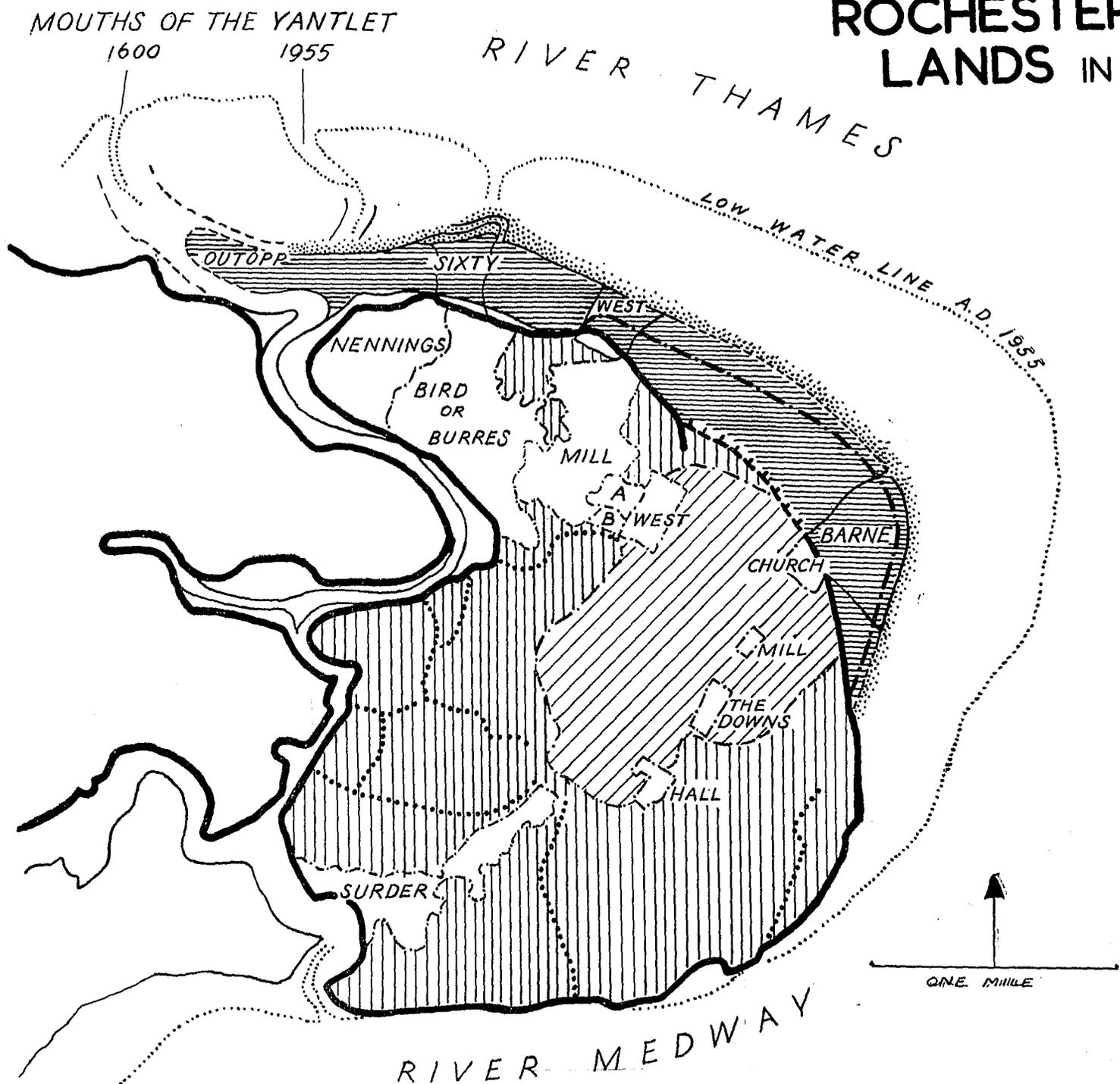
WHEN in 1397 Sir John de Cobham and Sir Robert Knollys completed the building of the New Rochester Bridge they decided that the method of maintaining the old bridge had proved unsatisfactory. Previously repairs had been effected by dividing the work and costs between the King, the Archbishop, the Bishop and certain riverside and adjacent manors, but the new proposal was that the Bridge should be endowed with property whose rents and profits would provide an income for maintenance, any deficiencies to be made up by the personages and manors aforementioned. In order to encourage other landowners, Sir John himself donated certain family property for this purpose, these being the Manor of Rosecourt in Grain, the Manor of Tilbury and a marsh in Hoo.

The Cobham family had long been acquiring marshlands and other property in the lower Medway Valley, for as early as the middle of the thirteenth century an earlier Sir John had bought a marsh in Stoke bearing the imposing name of Kattespettesmors (i.e., Kattespettes Marsh)<sup>1</sup> and by the end of the fourteenth century they possessed a considerable property in the Medway marshes.<sup>2</sup> The Grain property of the Cobhams appertained principally to the Manor of Rose, Raies or Reys Court, and, as noted by the late Miss Janet Becker in her book, *Rochester Bridge*, the Receipt of Rent from this Manor is recorded in the first Bridgewardens' *Account Rolls* for 1398-9. Thereafter, in the *Rolls* for the fifteenth century, references to rent and other matters concerning the Grain lands appear, including certain marsh names. A list of these, doubtless incomplete, includes the following :

Westsixte, Southwerde (Southerward), Boutefleet (Bowteflete, etc.), Briddesmissh (Bridesmarsh, Briddeshope), Tanners (Tannersmissh) Tannershope), 45 acres ; Prestesmissh (Prestmarsh, Priests Marsh), 10 acres ; Jannesham (Janneshope), 20 acres ; Westreggesteshope (Tregethlope), 10 acres ; Leketh (Lakehith, Lekheth, later, Leakheath), Barton, Mellemerssh (Melmarsch), Swerdhope, 85 acres ; and Le Inning. It is noted in Roll 37 (1430-1) that 30 acres of arable and 779 acres of marsh were let ; in Roll 38 (1435-6) the figures were 70 acres and 825 acres, respectively, while 81½ acres of land was let in 1445-6 (Roll 43).

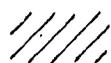
The first definitive Inventory of the Bridge Lands in Grain of which we have knowledge was that of 1575-7, the " Elizabethan " Survey

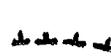
# ROCHESTER BRIDGE LANDS IN GRAIN



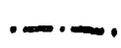
 Marshes lost since c. A.D. 1600

 Fresh marshes never the property of the Bridge.

 Upland

 Extent of present Grain Beach.

 Modern sea wall.

 Sea wall c. A.D. 1600.

 Other old walls.

 Beach c. A.D. 1600

A, B. Salt Ham (later West Ham)

mentioned by Miss Becker, who has printed an abstract of it.<sup>3</sup> They then amounted to 741 acres of marshland and 65 acres of arable ; this arable land will hereinafter be referred to as the *Upland* parcels, since they were located on the higher ground of the Island, above marsh level. Seven marshes, three of which were of considerable size, made up the marshland part of the Inventory, and three of them still bore their fifteenth century names, viz., Mill, Sextye and West, but the other small mediæval marshes had lost their identities in the great marshes called Nenyng (100 acres), Burres (240 acres) and Surder (120 acres).

Marshes under these or the earlier names will not be found on the map to-day, and indeed some of the marshes themselves have long since been "lost to sea" ; nor are inventories of much service without maps for the purposes of identification, but fortunately the Bridgewardens still have in their possession certain Survey Maps which take us back to the time of the first Elizabeth, and a careful comparison between them and with modern O.S. Sheets has served to identify many of the marshes and all the Upland parcels.

These are the Survey Maps in question :

A.—c. 1616.<sup>4</sup> 32 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. by 24 in. A map of the *Northern Marshes* with an inset chart of Church Field and the adjoining Barne or Bur-fleet Marsh. There is no title label, date or signature, but compass points and a scale are shown. The marshes are named, and the names of tenants of surrounding marshes are included. A most valuable cartographic record, which, among other things, identifies some of the mediæval marshes and all the northern group of 1575-7 Inventory.

B.—1674. 30 in. by 26 in. A map of those parts of the Bridge Lands let at that time to Thomas Potit and Mrs. Mary Best. It includes part of the *Northern Marshes*, all the *South Marshes* and all the *Upland Parcels*. All parcels and marshes are marked in areas, but only some of them are named ; there are compass points and a scale. The names of other Bridge lessees and of owners or tenants of adjoining lands are marked. The Title Label is as follows :

" A PLOT of all the Lands and Marshes demised by the Wardens and Assistants of Rochester Bridge in the Countie of Kent to Thomas Potit Esq. and Mrs. Mary Best lying and being in the Isle of Graine with the quantities of every peece in Acres, Roods, Dayworks and Perches contyning together in the whole 444 Acres and 3 Roods and 8 Dayworks. The Marshland is coloured Greene and the Arable land Yellow. As the same was Surveyed in May Anno Dni 1674. By James Felmond, Philo: math."

C.—1716. 24 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. by 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  in. A map of the *Northern Marshes*. Marshes are lettered and numbered, but not named, and there are two Tables of areas which refer. Names of owners or tenants of adjoining

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marshes are shown. There is a scale and compass points ; the orientation is unusual, north being towards the bottom right hand corner. The Title Label is as follows :

“ A Map of Marsh-lands in ye Northwest Level of ye Isle of Grain. Being part of the lands belonging to Rochester Bridge holden of ye Wardens and Assistants of ye same by Lease by Decimus Newman and Grimball Panchford and ye heirs of Francis Harris in two several Lots. Done Ano 1716. David Polhill, Esq., and Sir Tho: Twisden, Wardens.”

D.—1716.  $24\frac{1}{2}$  in. by  $19\frac{1}{2}$  in. A companion map to C. above and presented in the same way, but with the orientation showing north towards the left hand margin. The map is in two sections, one showing all the *Upland Parcels* and the other the *South Marshes*. The two Title Labels are as follows :

“ A Map of five parcels of Uplands now in seven pieces in ye Island of Grain in ye County of Kent lying dispersed : holden by Newman and Panchford by Lease from ye Wardens and Assistants of the Bridge at Rochester. Accurately surveyed and measured Anno. Dom. 1716. David Polhill, Esq. and Sr. Thomas Twisden, Bt., then Wardens. By Geo: Russell of Rochester.”

“ A Map of several pieces of Marsh-Land in ye South-west Level in ye Island of Graine in the County of Kent ; holden by Lease by Decimus Newman and Grimball Panchford from the Wardens and Assistants of Rochester Bridge ; Surveyed and measured Anno. 1716. David Polhill, Esq., and Sr. Thomas Twisden, Bart., then Wardens. By Geo: Russell of Rochester.”

E.—1812. Title :

“ A Plan of two Estates situated in the Parish of St. James, in the Isle of Grain in the County of Kent, belonging to the Wardens and Commonalty of Rochester Bridge. Surveyed by J. Gouge of Sittingbourne, 1812.”

Marshes and lands are some numbered and others lettered, with tables of identity, giving areas.

We have here cartographic records of the Bridge lands in Grain covering some five centuries and they can now be compared with each other, with the Tithe Award Map of 1839 and with modern Ordnance Survey Sheets.

The primary division of the property was as between marshes and Upland parcels of arable, but the marshes themselves fall into three natural groups. These, with their component marshes derived from the 1575-7 Inventory, are as follows :

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1. The North Marshes.  
Nenyng (Nennings), 100 acres, Burres (Bird) 240 acres, Mill (Mellemerssh) 120 acres, Sextye (Sixty) 45 acres, and West 30 acres. Total, North Marshes, 535 acres.
2. The South Marshes.  
Surder, 120 acres.
3. The East Marsh.  
Barne (Bur-fleet), 85 acres.
4. The Upland Parcels.
 

(a) Jeffreys Croft, Blacksalt Croft, Jeffreys Gate	33 acres.
(b) Upper Downe Field, Downe Field, Clee Croft	10½ ,,
(c) Parsonage Field, Church Field, Priests Sole	14¾ ,,
(d) North Mill, Ballards Mead, Lemans Field, the fields next the tenements of Swalman and Richards	3½ ,,
(e) Hall Field, Nether Hall Field, Upper Hall Field	4 ,,
Total, Upland parcels,	65¾ acres.

Total holding in 1575-7, 806¾ acres.

The true figure may be 20 acres more due to the possible omission of West Ham, see p. 193, note 1.

NOTES ON THE MARSHES AND PARCELS

1. The North Marshes.
 

(a) Nenyng or Nennings. It is so named in the Inventory and on the A.—c. 1616 map, but is not known from the earlier records. Its area in the Inventory is returned at 100 acres, and the A.—c. 1616 Map shows it as one large marsh, but on the C.—1716 it is broken up into four marshes divided by ditches, and with an alleged area of 121 acres. The E.—1812 Map shows six marshes covering its ancient extent with an area of 113½ acres, which agrees with the modern O.S. Sheets covering four parcels and parts of two others. The original area may have excluded large "Fleets" which may have been included in the later measurements. The 1812 names are of a trivial descriptive character such as Sluice, Pond, Fleet, Hay Stack, etc. This large marsh was included with part of the adjoining Burres Marsh in the lease of Potit and Best in 1674.

(b) Burres or Bird. Called Burres Marsh with an area of 240 acres in the Inventory, it appears on the A.—c. 1616 Map, Bird Marsh "alias Burres Marsh." On the C.—1716 Map it consists of 10 marshes with a total acreage of 264. On the B.—1674 Map part of this marsh with the whole of Nennings makes up an area of 175 acres in the leasehold of Potit and Best; the area agrees well enough with the modern measurement of the same land. Twelve subsidiary marshes represent it in 1812

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with a total area of  $238\frac{1}{2}$  acres, which agrees with the ten modern O.S. parcels which cover its original extent. Twenty acres must be subtracted from the 1716 figure for marsh subsequently lost to sea. The name only appears on the A.—c. 1616 Map, and the 1812 names were of the same character as those of Nennings.

(c) Mill Marsh. The Mellemarsh of the fifteenth century records is so named and delimited on the A.—c. 1616 Map, but its name then disappears. It was apparently in the leasehold of Sir Francis Clerke in 1674, while in 1716/50 acres were let to Newman and Panchford, and the remainder to Wilford. By 1812 all but 44 acres had been sold. It was returned at 120 acres in the Inventory, and the same area to-day of 8 parcels measures 116 acres. Its name only appears on the first map.

(d) West Marsh. Delimited and named on the A.—c. 1616 Map, where the greater part of it is shown lying outside the sea wall as a salt-marsh. Its area is given in the Inventory as 30 acres, and this is about the area shown on the A.—c. 1616 Map. The marsh has long since been lost to sea, but six acres remained in 1716, and a small part of it lying inside the Wall measures about two acres to-day.

(e) Sextye or Sixty. Called Sextye Marsh in the Inventory with an acreage of 45, it is shown on the A.—c. 1616 Map as Sixty Marsh, but with an acreage which could hardly have exceeded 30 or so. It lay entirely outside the mediæval sea wall and had disappeared by 1716.

There is an entry in Roll 43 (1445-6) relating to a "Westsixte" Marsh and this suggests that both West and Sixty once formed a long and narrow marsh lying outside the Wall; it would have contained well over 100 acres.

(f) West Ham or Salt Ham. Between Mill Marsh on the west and the upland parcel of West Field to the east the A.—c. 1616 Map shows a marsh named "West Ham, alias Salt Ham," but no such marsh appears under this name in the Inventory; as all the property listed therein has been identified it would seem that there has either been an omission, or that this marsh was acquired between 1575-7 and c. 1616, for all the maps represent it as Bridge property. On the B.—1674 Map the marsh is shown divided into two parts, one Great Ham of  $13\frac{1}{4}$  acres and the other Little Ham of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres. The C.—1716 Map shows Great Ham with  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres and Little Ham with  $14\frac{1}{2}$  acres, an obvious transposition. In 1812 Great Ham had become Twelve Acres Marsh of  $13\frac{1}{2}$  acres and Little Ham was called Little Pound Marsh with  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres; the area to-day is returned as at 21.48 acres.

### 2. The South Marshes.

The A.—c. 1616 Map does not include the south marshes, but that of B.—1674 displays a connected string of 7 marshes stretching from Colemouth Creek to the Upland at Wallend, and with an acreage of

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121 acres. This same set of marshes appears on the C.—1716 Map with an alleged area of 108 acres, but to this must be added  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres for Salts. In 1812 eight marshes made up an area of 127 acres, of which 17 acres are for Salts and Wall. The modern area of 8 O.S. parcels measures 121 acres, which includes 13 acres for Salts and Wall ; the variations in these areas is due to fluctuating figures used for areas of "Salts," that is, pieces of salt marsh outside the river wall, and for the area occupied by the Wall itself. This series of marshes have no recorded names until 1812, when the same trivial descriptive names are used. As the area agrees so well with that of the unknown Surder Marsh of the Inventory there need be little hesitation in accepting this area as being that of Surder. Doubtless many of the fifteenth century marshes whose localities are unknown also lay here, particularly that called Southerward.

### 3. The East Marsh.

A marsh of 86 acres called Barne occurs in the Inventory, and this appears on the A.—c. 1616 Map as "Bur-fleet alias Barne Marsh," but a careful estimate of its size (by means of the scale) indicates that by this date it measured between 60 and 65 acres. It was a large triangular projection into what is now the sea, north-eastwards of Grain Church. There is no further cartographic record of it until 1812 when it had shrunk to a shadow of its former state being no more than  $10\frac{1}{2}$  acres in extent, which was further reduced to  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres by 1839 ; since then it has entirely been captured by the sea.

### 4. The Upland Parcels.

(1) West Field. The A.—c. 1616 Map so names this large parcel, but adds "alias Jeffreys Croft and Jeffreys Gate," which serves to identify it with these parcels named in the Inventory, but with the addition of Blacksalt Croft. The Inventory gives the total area as 33 acres, which agrees with that on the B.—1674 Map of  $33\frac{1}{2}$ , and also with the D.—1716 figure of  $33\frac{1}{4}$  acres.

Between 1716 and 1812 the Wardens added a strip on the south side of the parcel, so that its area was increased to  $37\frac{1}{4}$  acres ; some time after 1839 yet another small field was acquired so that the whole parcel measured 40 acres in the nineteenth century. The name appears on all the maps, and on it stands Rosecourt Farm, the successor to the mediæval manor house of the same name.

(2) The Downs. This parcel included the Upper Downe Field, Downe Field and Clee Croft of the Inventory, when it was listed as at  $10\frac{1}{2}$  acres, which is confirmed by the B.—1674 Map, but on D.—1716 it is

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shown as at 12 acres, although there does not appear to have been any addition. The E.—1812 Map gives  $10\frac{3}{4}$  acres, and as it retains its ancient boundaries on the O.S. Sheets it has been possible to determine its true area which is  $11\frac{1}{4}$  acres.

(3) Church Field. The Church Field shown on the A.—c. 1616 Map adjoins Barne Marsh on the south ; it seems to represent the Church Field, Parsonage Field and Priests Sole of the Inventory, wherein its total acreage is recorded as  $14\frac{3}{4}$  acres. But the B.—1674 Map gives only  $12\frac{1}{2}$  acres, which must be an error, since D.—1716 and E.—1812 return 15 and  $14\frac{1}{2}$  acres respectively, while the Tithe Map of 1839 lists it as a little over  $14\frac{1}{4}$  acres. The identity of the field is now lost, so it has not been possible to check its extent.

(4) Mill or Forge Field. The B.—1674 Map shows a rectangular parcel amounting to 3 acres called Mill Field, and the same field appears on the D.—1716 Map but is credited with  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres. In 1812 it was called Forge Field and was rated at  $3\frac{1}{4}$  acres. Until quite recently its identity was clear and it measured about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres.

It clearly covers the five small parcels of the Inventory whose total area was  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres, and called North Mill, Ballard's Mead, Leman's Field and the fields next the tenements of Swalman and Richards. The parcel was separated from the road (Chapel Lane) by a narrow strip upon which stand to-day some nineteenth century houses, doubtless the descendants of the lowly dwellings of Swalman and Richards. The names of the parcel suggest that here stood both the village smithy and mill. The identity of the field, and indeed of much surrounding it, is now lost in a building estate, and it will thus disappear from future O.S. Sheets.

(5) Hall Field. Hall Field, Upper and Nether Hall Field are listed in the Inventory as with an acreage of 4. Hall's Meadow and Hall's Field appear on B.—1674 rated at 7 acres, and at  $8\frac{1}{4}$  acres on both D.—1716 and E.—1812. The increase between 1674 and 1716 was due to a small addition, but the 4 acres of the Inventory must either have been an error or the fields were enlarged between 1575 and 1674. The identity seems clear enough on the modern O.S. Sheets, but the area is  $9\frac{3}{4}$  acres although the Tithe Map of 1839 gives a little less than 8 acres as the area. However, the boundaries may have changed slightly, although the parcel has maintained its distinctive shape throughout the centuries.

### *The Fifteenth Century Marshes*

Of the incomplete list of fifteenth century marshes on p. 184, only three have been identified in the Inventory of 1575-7, namely Westsixte (counted as two) and Mellemerssh or Mill Marsh. We may guess that Southerward was one of the Surder marshes, while it is

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certainly tempting to identify the earlier Swerdhope of 85 acres with the later Barne Marsh of the same area. The truth is that by the sixteenth century the majority of the names of the fifteenth century marshes of from 10 to 45 acres had been lost in the larger marshes bearing other, but not necessarily later, names. But by the seventeenth century even these names were forgotten, and men had to fall back upon names of a local descriptive character such as Pond, Fleet, Pound, Sluice, etc., or to names referring to acreages, such as Nine Acres, Twelve Acres, Twenty Acres, or to such ephemera as Hay Stacks ; a sad declension from the fine old fifteenth century names.

### *The Lost Marshes*

The great fringe of marshes which made a quarter circle around the present shore of Grain from Yantlet Mouth to a point opposite Sheerness has now entirely disappeared beneath the sea. It must have measured some 600 acres or more and included the Bridge marshes of Sixty, West and Barne, as well as marshes which are named as Outopp, at the Yantlet Mouth, Rugges Hook Marsh and Bakers Marsh, adjoining Sixty, " Colledge Land " next to West, and a marsh which belonged to Sir William Brooke next Barne ; all according to the A.—c. 1616 Map.

The slow subsidence of the land (or the advance of the tide) which has been going on in the south-east of England since Roman times has been responsible for the destruction of this great tract of marsh, coupled with its exposed situation on an open coast. When the tide begins to overflow low-lying lands two effects may result, dependent upon local topographical and tidal conditions : the tidewater may start to deposit material on to the subsiding surface of the land and so build it up, layer by layer, with equal steps as the land sinks and/or, the tide advances higher ; on the other hand the wind and tide may wash away the surface gradually and so re-distribute it in the form of mud or ooze. It is this latter operation which has taken place at Grain with reference to this tract of marsh, for it is represented to-day by a vast area of ooze which is revealed around the coast at low tide. At high tide the water covers all, but to a very shallow degree.

As will be seen from the Map which illustrates this paper a mediæval sea-wall once protected part of this great marsh from the tide. The A.—c. 1616 Map shows this older Wall enclosing part of West Marsh and the whole of Barne Marsh, as well as the great unnamed marsh which lay between these two. Some time after 1616 one of the great phenomenal storm surge tides must have so damaged this wall that it was abandoned and a new wall built further inland, this being the wall which remains to-day. We know that in 1711 the Bridgewardens were forced to abandon some 30 acres of marsh to the sea, and by 1812 a miserable remnant only remained of Barne Marsh.

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We need not doubt the accuracy of the reconstruction of this part of the coast as shown on our Map, for several checks can establish it.

1. On the 1616 Map the area from the Yantlet Mouth to beyond "Colledge Land" in the east is part of the main map but Barne Marsh with the adjoining Church Field appears as an inset; yet when both are transferred to a modern map, as that which illustrates this paper, it is seen that the marsh edges, beaches and sea walls fall on a natural line with each other, and their continuation and unity is obvious.
2. It will likewise be seen that this restored coastline from the 1616 Map follows conformably in a remarkable manner the line of the present Low Water Mark. Now this Low Water Line itself represents an ancient shore line, probably that which obtained about the Roman Age, and thus the Elizabethan shore is shown to be a true drowned shore line intermediate between the present coast and a more ancient one.
3. On the 1616 Map the course of the Yantlet as it approaches its outfall into the Thames is shown as following a different direction from that which it follows to-day. (See Map.) Now this older course has left its mark and can be detected to-day as a channel in the mud flats at low tide.
4. The revelation that a continuous beach of considerable length (about 4 miles) once marked the shore of Grain throws light on a problem which has much puzzled local observers. For it is stated by the Place Name authorities<sup>6</sup> that the name Grain means a "gravelly, sandy shore" and it was not understood how the present small and obscure beach could ever have been conspicuous enough to have given rise to the name. We now know that this beach is of very recent origin and that an older and longer beach once existed further seawards. Hence the name is seen now to be quite consistent with a topographical feature which once characterized the Island.
5. The previous existence of marshes to the north and east of the present coast of Grain explains also a persistent local legend which is to the effect that the Church of St. James once stood in the centre of the Island. Unless the site of an earlier Church was elsewhere, which is improbable, this could never have been the case, nonetheless it is true that when Barne Marsh extended considerably beyond the Church in the fifteenth and earlier centuries it would certainly have given the impression that the edifice was more centrally placed in the Island than now. To-day the high tide washes within 250 yards of the Church, whereas in the fifteenth century it was certainly 1,000 yards distant.

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SUMMARY OF BRIDGE PROPERTY IN GRAIN

Date.	Area in Acres		Total
	Arable	Marsh	
A.D. 1430 ..	30	779	809
A.D. 1435 ..	70	825	895
A.D. 1445 ..	81 $\frac{1}{2}$	—	—
A.D. 1575-7 ..	65 $\frac{3}{4}$	741	806 $\frac{3}{4}$ <sup>1</sup>
A.D. 1716 ..	73	571 $\frac{1}{2}$	644 $\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>2</sup>
A.D. 1812 ..	74 $\frac{1}{4}$	598 $\frac{1}{2}$	673 $\frac{1}{4}$ <sup>3</sup>
A.D. 1839 ..	73 $\frac{1}{2}$	568	641 $\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>4</sup>

THE DATE OF THE FIRST MAP, c. 1616

This map is undated, and it has been referred to herein as of *circa* 1616, which is the earliest date possible for its production. The latest date is 1641, for it was produced in that year in a lawsuit in which the Bridge was involved ; the true date lies somewhere between these two extremes.

The evidence for dating comes from the landowners of properties, adjacent to those of the Bridge, which are notated on it.

A Sir William Brooke is shown as possessing a marsh next to Barne. Sir William Brooke, 9th Lord Cobham, died in 1597 leaving three surviving sons, Henry 10th Lord Cobham, William and George, and he specifically left his lands in the "Ile of Greane" to his son George. George was executed, Henry disgraced and the Cobham estates taken over by the Crown in 1603. The third son, the "Sir William Brooke, Knt," of his father's Will, was killed in a duel with Sir Thomas Lucas's son, but the exact date cannot be ascertained. He was elected Knight of the Shire of Kent in September, 1597, but a bye-election writ was issued on January 5th, 1598, "vice Wm. Brooke, Kt., deceased."<sup>7</sup> He made his Will<sup>8</sup> in June, 1597, and it was proved on the 25th of December, 1597; he was thus probably killed in October or November,

<sup>1</sup> To this should be added Saltham, *alias* West Ham, of 21 acres, which has either been missed from the Inventory or was purchased later. Making up to 828 acres.

<sup>2</sup> To reconcile these figures with those of the Inventory of 1575 the following adjustments should be made. Add 69 acres of West and Sixty lost to sea, 86 acres of Barne not included in this Survey, 70 acres of Mill either sold or let to another tenant, and 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres less of Salts in the reckoning for Surder. Subtract 24 acres more Salts for Bird, 21 acres more reckoned for Nennings, and 7 acres more for the Upland parcels ; making up to 828 acres.

<sup>3</sup> To reconcile : add 76 acres of Mill sold, an acre of Saltham less, 150 acres of West, Sixty and Barne lost to sea. Subtract 14 acres more reckoned for Nennings, 4 acres more and 16 acres of Wall, Water and Salts for Surder, 29 acres of Wall and Water for Mill, and 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres more for the Upland parcels. Making up to 828 acres.

<sup>4</sup> To reconcile : add 76 acres of Mill sold, 155 acres of West, Sixty and Barne lost to sea, and 3 acres less of Surder. Subtract 12 acres more for Nennings, 6 acres of Wall for Mill, 21 acres more of Salts and Wall for Bird, and 8 acres more for the Upland parcels. Making up to 828 acres.

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1597.<sup>9</sup> No land is mentioned in the Will, and he left his possessions to his brother George.

We now come to a third Sir William Brooke, the son of George. Following the disgrace of the family in 1603 he was specifically forbidden to lay claim to the Cobham estates, or to assume the title (11th Lord Cobham) on the death of his uncle Henry in 1619. However, he was "restored in blood" in 1610 and was then allowed to enjoy certain of the family lands in Cooling and elsewhere; he was killed in 1643.<sup>10</sup> Other evidence on the Map indicates that it is this Brooke who was the landowner in Grain.

It will be noted that three other family names appear on both the first and second (1674) maps, these being Clerk or Clarke, Roper and Godfrey.

Lord Roper is shown on both maps as owning various parcels of land and marsh, but on the third map (1715) the title changes to Lord Tenham. John Roper of Lynsted was knighted in 1587, created Baron Teynham in 1616 and died in 1618. The 1619 Visitation of Kent has a section headed "Lord Roper, Baro. de Tenham." It is the creation of 1616 which supplies the *earliest* date for the map.

The Sir Francis Clerk of the B.—1674 Map is well known. He was of the Clerks of Rochester and Ulcombe, descended from the Clerks of Willoughby, was knighted in 1660, a Bridgewarden in 1663 and died in 1683. His father was Henry, who lived in Rochester, but the present writer has not been able to trace the family further back. Presumably the "Mr. W. Clarke" of the first Map was the grandfather of Sir Francis, although it should be noted that a Sir William Clerke, of the Clerkes of Ford, near Wrotham, was buried in that Church in 1612, and his ancestor, John Clerke, who died in 1480,<sup>11</sup> owned a marsh in Clyve (Cliff) called Shivere. However, it is improbable that two different families of the same name held the same parcel of land. The Godfreys were local people and the very first entries (1661) in the Parish Registers of Grain refer to births and deaths in the family of Thomas Godfrey (of the 1674 Map) but a gravestone in Grain Church to an earlier Thomas Godfrey bears date 1640, and this is the Godfrey of the A.—1616 Map.

The Brooke-Roper-Godfrey evidence has only succeeded in placing the date of the Map between 1616 and 1640. The identification of "Mr. W. Clarke" would probably narrow the gap.

### BRIDGE TENANTS, LANDOWNERS OR TENANTS OF ADJOINING LANDS AS SHOWN ON THE FOUR SURVEY MAPS

#### 1. Map A.—c. 1616

Mr. W. Clarke, Lord Roper, Anne Godfrey, widow, Mr. Sparks, Sir William Brooke, Mr. Carpenters (?), Messrs. Thomas and Edward Godfrey.

## THE ROCHESTER BRIDGE LANDS IN GRAIN

### 2. B.—1674

Sir Francis Clerk, Mr. Yeates, Col. Kendrick, Thomas Godfrey, Mr. Chambers, Lord Roper, Mr. Coulcat (?), John Plaistow.  
Bridge Leaseholders : Thomas Potit and Mrs. Mary Best.  
George Wood (of Barne Marsh).

### 3. C. and D.—1716

The late Gilborne, Mr. Grantham, Mr. Kendrick, Mr. Wilford, Mr. Yates, Lord Tenham, Francis Gouge, Mr. Pemble.  
Bridge Leaseholders : Decimus Newman and Grimball Panchford.

### 4. E.—1812

Mr. W. Lee, W. Petley, T. Hulks, John Smith, George Gipps, Messrs. Wells.  
Bridge Leaseholders : John and William Lake were the tenants of the Manor of Rose Court, 479 acres. 193 acres of the North Marshes were let to W. Petley.

## THE DISPERSAL OF THE BRIDGE LANDS

The remnants of the old Manor of Rose Court still remain in the possession of the Bridge, Mr. P. J. Mugeridge being the tenant of the farm to-day, which covers some 346 acres, of which 78 acres are Saltings, 222 acres fresh marshes and the balance arable.

A brief and incomplete résumé of the disposal of the remainder is as follows :

It would appear that some 70 acres of Mill Marsh were sold between 1716 and 1812, but possibly before 1716, for the Wilford of the Map of that date may have been the owner and not a Bridge tenant.

Some 346 acres of the Northern Marshes were sold to the War Office in 1923 in order to establish the Yantlet Firing Station ; this purchase included a small part of West Field. The large acreage thus sold, added to the present acreage of Rose Court Farm, indicates that the Bridge had added to their marshland property between 1843 and 1923.

Church Field was sold to the War Office in 1861 and Grain Fort was then built on part of it.

Mill Field was bought in 1947 by the Strood Rural District Council and is now part of a housing estate.

The disposal of Surder Marsh occurred between 1843 and 1923 for in the latter year the Medway Oil & Storage Company purchased the western part of it from the Southern Railway and the same Company acquired the eastern part of the same in 1946 from the Britannic Oil Storage Company (Col. Winch).

## THE ROCHESTER BRIDGE LANDS IN GRAIN

The Downs, Hall Field and the two small parcels adjoining West Field on the south were bought by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1948, and at the same time this Company took over the property of the Medway Oil & Storage Company.<sup>12</sup>

### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> *Cartularum de Surrenden*, Index, Vol. VI, p. 248. Maidstone Museum.
- <sup>2</sup> See the Index volumes of *Cart. Surr.*, Vols. III, p. 349, I, p. 227, VI, p. 289, p. 296, etc.
- <sup>3</sup> *Rochester Bridge*, pp. 33, 34.
- <sup>4</sup> See page 193 for a discussion on its date.
- <sup>5</sup> Fleets are large (wide and shallow) marsh streams; they were originally tidal creeks which have been cut off from free access to the river by the sea walls, and so reduced to freshwater drainage channels. Marsh ditches are narrow and deeper than the fleets, and are artificial in origin.
- <sup>6</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of Place Names*, 1947, p. 193, and Wallenberg, *Place Names of Kent*, 1934, p. 131.
- <sup>7</sup> P.R.O.C. 219, 284, 23.
- <sup>8</sup> P.C.C. 110 Cobham.

I am much indebted to Prof. J. E. Neale for information kindly supplied on this matter.

- <sup>10</sup> *The Complete Peerage*, iii, 350 (G.E.C.).
- <sup>11</sup> *Kentish Items—Wrotham*, 45, 1915, Griffin. Also P.C.C. 2 Logge. References kindly supplied by Mr. L. R. A. Grove.
- <sup>12</sup> The writer is obliged to the Rochester Bridgewardens for permission to study their Records, a permission obtained through the kind offices of our Member Col. E. T. Baker, Clerk to the Rochester Bridge Trust, and also to Miss Edith Scroggs, who generously gave much assistance.

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